



Seminar Report

“All hands on deck: partnership building to deliver on climate action”

Tokyo 7 March, 2017

The EU-Japan Centre for Industrial Cooperation co-organized a seminar on climate change on 7 March 2017 in Tokyo, together with the Delegation of the European Union to Japan. During the seminar, policies for implementing the Paris agreement were explained by representatives of the European Commission and the Japanese Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI). The ensuing panel discussion offered an opportunity for non-state actors including business, local government and academics to debate how to build partnerships and actively engage in climate action in order to realize the transition to low-carbon economies.

The seminar was inaugurated by welcoming remarks of Mr. Francesco Fini, Deputy Head of the EU Delegation. Mr. Fini pointed out that it remained crucially important that cooperation among developed economies being steadily reinforced so as to maintain the international momentum on climate action. According to Mr. Fini, the European Union is convinced that climate action is not only good for the environment, but it is economically feasible and leads to new business opportunities. Therefore, we have to do it not only to avoid climate change and its negative impacts, but because it makes sense economically, he said.

Mr. Jake Werksman, Principal Advisor of DG CLIMA, European Commission explained how the EU prepares to implement the Paris Agreement. According to Mr. Werksman, challenges in implementing the Paris Agreement are maintaining ambitious and comprehensive target and keeping a transparent and accountable approach. The EU is targeting a reduction of up to 40% of Green House Gas (GHG) by 2030. For making EU climate policy inclusive, Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) is very important. The EU climate change policy is comprehensive because it is supported by targets and franking policies on energy efficiency and renewable energy. As for a long-term target, Mr. Werksman said that the EU would formulate an ambitious emission reducing target for the year of 2050 in collaboration with member states.

Mr. Jun Takashina, Deputy Director-General for Environmental Affairs, METI gave

explanation on Japan's countermeasures against global warming. Following the adaptation of the Paris Agreement in COP21, the Japanese government adopted the "Plan for Global Warming Countermeasures" on 13 May 2016. A mid-term target of 26.0% reduction by Fiscal Year 2030 as compared to FY 2013 was established. For the longer term, Japanese government is aiming at reducing GHG emissions by 80% by 2050. While the mid-term target is an accumulation of sectoral reductions, it is necessary to study "what and how to do" for a long-term target. Principles for a long-term GHG reduction are reinforcing research and development for innovations and encouraging investments to enhance international competitiveness.

Mr. Takashina touched upon an "Interim Summary of the Long-term Global Countermeasures Platform". The platform has introduced the "Three arrows" as its core strategy to achieve carbon neutrality. The three arrows are (1) International contribution, (2) Lifecycle Thinking and (3) Innovation. As for the lifecycle thinking, Mr. Takashina stresses the importance of reducing emissions at the utilization stage which are much greater than manufacture or transportation stage. According to Mr. Takashina, Japan is ready to render support in GHG emission reduction on a global stage.

A panel discussion was proceeded by Mr. Yuji Mizuno as a moderator. Mr. Mizuno is a Leader of the Climate and Energy Area, Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (IGES). Mr. Mizuno asked each panelist to speak about two points, i.e. request, if any to the government to support their climate action and the prospect for EU-Japan cooperation.

Mr. Toshihiro Kawakami of LIXIL Corporation, a manufacturer of housing and building related products, reveals that most of the activities of his company is related to the environment and climate protection. Therefore, they are very much concerned about the future government policy including the possibility of introducing carbon pricing. Mr. Kawakami indicates that their concern lies mostly in the designing of such a system.

Ms. Akiko Miura of Tokyo Metropolitan Government points out that the Paris Agreement welcomes the climate action of cities. She indicated that the cap and trade system that the Tokyo government introduced is successful in reducing CO2 emissions. According to Ms. Miura, Japanese corporate managers pay more attention recently to the environment and they are positive in making investment for energy saving.

Prof. Yukari Takamura of Nagoya University, too indicated positive attitudes of the Japanese business community and local government vis-à-vis of climate change after the adoption of the Paris Agreement. She referred to the advanced energy saving activities of automobile and housing industries. According to Prof. Takamura, more than

70% of newly constructed houses are “zero emission houses (ZEH)”, for example. In order to promote more climate action, Prof. Takamura recommends governments to support ecologically advanced industries.

As for possible cooperation between Europe and Japan, Mr. Kawakami expressed good prospects for combining Japanese technology and European ideas and designing ability. LIXIL is actually promoting such cooperation with their German affiliate. Ms. Miura believes that information sharing and cooperation between policy officers of local governments are useful and she appreciates governmental support for closer cooperation of cities. Mr. Werksman said that the EU is willing to provide more information on the EU Emission Trading System (ETS) and the carbon pricing which he thinks is a functioning framework for reducing CO2 emission.

Prof. Takamura stressed the importance of involving local governments and enterprises in promoting mutual understandings. She hoped to see Japan take leadership in international climate action especially in making rules for implementing the Paris Agreement. Mr. Takashina supported the idea of an EU-Japan joint effort in keeping momentum of the Paris Agreement. Mr. Werksman pointed out the necessity to “underpin” the U.S. engagement in the Paris Agreement.

In the closing, Mr. Silviu Jora, General Manager of the EU-Japan Centre for Industrial Cooperation, expressed his hope to see more EU-Japan cooperation in implementing Paris Agreement and climate change policy in general, centering around the “horizontal cooperation” for innovation.

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